work. If they deserve it they are spanked with a stick, not only by their mother or father, but by the slaves both male and female. The Rwala believe that the rod originated in Paradise, *al-ʿaṣa aẓharat min al-ǧenna*, and that it also leads man back to it. The older boys attend to the mares, guard them on the pasture grounds, take them to water, and ride on them while migrating; they also bring fuel to the men's quarters, serve the guests with water, etc. They squat with the men around the fire listening to the conversation and learn also to recite poems and songs, in this manner acquainting themselves with all public affairs. Boys learn to shoot before they are fourteen and take part in at least one raid before they are sixteen. At this period the father would not think of punishing the disobedience of his son simply with a stick but uses a saber or a dagger instead. By cutting or stabbing them the father not merely punishes the boys but hardens them for their future life. In the opinion of the Bedouins the son who disobeys is guilty of rebellion, for which the proper punishment is the saber, *as-sejf lemin ʿaṣa'*.

BOYS' GAMES

The boys are never idle. When they are not helping their parents, they play. Some of their games are dangerous; all, however, tend to harden them and sharpen their faculties.

In playing *ramḥa* two lines are formed. The members of each side, holding their companions by the hand, take position and advance against the other side, kicking their opponents till one whole side rolls down, *jetarâmaḥûn*. Many leave the game with their bellies black and blue, but will stand up as long as they can bear the pain.

A very dangerous game is *šâra*. The boys bring their slings, *miẓlaʿ* (pl., *maẓâliʿ*), gather a supply of pebbles, separate into two hostile groups, and, declaring war on each other, throw stones from their slings, *jetašârûn*. Blood always flows. Often a boy loses an eye, gets a broken head or a split bone in his hand or leg, or even falls down dead; and yet the parents never forbid the game. For a dead boy the kin of the player who killed him must pay the blood price; for other serious hurts half of that. If the guilty party cannot be found, the relatives of all the boys participating in the game must pay, compensation of this kind being called *medda' ṛšejje*.